

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4730

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4238

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR PINS VS

SUBJECT: INQUIRIES CONCERNING US EFFORTS TO FACILITATE MOVEMENT
TO THE US

REF: STATE 076207

1. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO PARAS 5, 6 AND 7 IN PROPOSED GUIDANCE.

HOWEVER, WE DESIRE REVISIONS IN PARAS 3 AND 4.

2. THE GVN HAS A POLICY NOT TO ISSUE PASSPORTS AND EXIT VISAS TO
VIETNAMESE CITIZENS SEEKING TO GO ABROAD IN THE PRESENT EMERGENCY
SITUATION. IN VIEW OF THE WILD RUMORS WHICH ARE CIRCULATING FREELY IN

SVN AND THE SCARE REPORTS OF ESCAPING REFUGEES, A NEAR PANIC SITUATION

COULD DEVELOP IN SAIGON WHICH COULD BECOME EXTREMELY DIFFICULT
FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONTROL. IT IS USG POLICY TO GIVE EVERY
ASSISTANCE TO SVN IN ITS RESISTANCE TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE INVASION,
AND IT IS THEREFORE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT WE COOPERATE TO THE
FULLEST POSSIBLE EXTENT WITH GVN MEASURES DESIGNED TO REDUCE PANIC
AND IMPROVE MORALE, BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY.

3. CERTAINLY WE SHOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEMORALIZATION BY OUR
OWN ACTIONS NO MATTER HOW WELL-INTENTIONED.

WERE WE TO LET IT BE KNOWN THAT WE QUESTION THESE GVN POLICIES
AND ARE SEEKING INFORMATION FOR ALL GVN CITIZENS WHO WISH TO DEPART
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VIETNAM TO DO SO, WE COULD HAVE CAUSED PANIC OF DANGEROUS PROPORTIONS

UNDERMINING NOT ONLY THE WILL OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE TO CONTINUE THEIR RESISTANCE BUT ALSO COMPLICATING AND POSSIBLY ENDANGERING OUR OWN EFFORTS TO PROTECT AMERICANS IN THE EVENT AN EVACUATION SHOULD BECOME NECESSARY.

4. WE RECOMMEND THAT PARA 3 SHOULD READ AS FOLLOWS: "IF ASKED WHAT THE U.S. WOULD DO SHOULD GVN NOT ISSUE PASSPORTS TO THOSE WHO WISH TO OBTAIN U.S. VISAS OR WHO ARRIVE AT PORTS OF ENTRY WITHOUT DOCUMENTATION, DEPARTMENT PLANS TO STATE THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO ADMINISTER U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW IN A WAY DESIGNED TO HELP THOSE DESIRING ASSISTANCE. WE UNDERSTAND THE GVN HAS A POLICY IN THE PRESENT MILITARY EMERGENCY NOT TO GENERALLY ISSUE PASSPORTS FOR TRAVEL ABROAD. THIS POLICY IS DESIGNED TO AVERT POSSIBLE PANIC IN THE

PRESENT TENSE SITUATION AND TO STRENGTHEN SVN'S DEFENSE AGAINST THE NORTH VIETNAMESE INVASION. THE USG OF COURSE FULLY SUPPORTS THIS POLICY AND WILL COOPERATE WITH THE GVN IN EVERY WAY."

5. WE SHOULD ADD TO PARA 4 THE FOLLOWING CLAUSE: ALTHOUGH WE NOTE THE SITUATION HAS SEEMED TO STABILIZE IN THE LAST FEW DAYS.

6. FYI: REGARDLESS OF GVN REFUSAL TO CONSIDER ALL PASSPORT APPLICANTS,

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR IS CONTINUING TO ISSUE PASSPORTS TO THE WIVES, CHILDREN AND FIANCEES OF AMERICANS AND TO ORPHANS, AND WE BELIEVE FURTHER RELAXATIONS WILL OCCUR IF WE DO NOT PREVENT IT BY OUR OWN ACTIONS.

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